

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Hovey: Motor Vehicle Child Restraint Bill Signed Into Law Today Will Protect Children, Save Lives



Governor M. Jodi Rell has signed into law a bill (House Bill 6660) cosponsored by state Representative DebraLee Hovey that strengthens a state statute requiring young children riding in motor vehicles to wear seat belts and other restraint systems.

“Governor Rell did the right thing by signing this bill into law Thursday. It will help prevent children who are passengers in a motor vehicle from receiving serious and possibly fatal injuries should an accident occur,” Representative Hovey said. “Even though state law currently requires children who are riding in motor vehicles to be secured in approved child restraint systems, I still have observed far too many children who should have been belted into car seats or booster seats moving around inside the car or leaning over the front seat while talking with their parents.”

“If an accident occurs, children who are not belted in will be thrown around inside a car and their injuries will be far more severe than would have been the case if they had been properly secured. Although most parents are responsible and make sure their children are wearing seat belts or are secured by child restraint systems before turning into the street, some still fail to do so. When adults unnecessarily put their children at risk by not complying with the law, it becomes an enforcement issue,” Representative Hovey said

“I can personally attest to the fact that child restraint systems can save children’s lives and prevent major injuries,” Representative Hovey said. My son was involved in a fatal car accident a few years ago. He was sitting in the back seat and had his seat belt on. Even though he was strapped in, he was thrown forward when the accident occurred but only received a minor head injury. He survived and avoided more severe injuries because he was wearing his seat belt.”

The bill:

- Extends child restraint system use requirements from children under age four weighing less than 40 pounds to children under age seven or who weigh less than 60 pounds, regardless of age.
- Requires any child under age one or weighing less than 20 pounds to be transported in a rear-facing position in his child restraint system.

- Requires children restrained in booster seats to be anchored by a seat belt that includes a shoulder belt.